NETWORK WORKING GROUP
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Postel

ON MAIL SERVICE TO CCN

Most of the recent documents on mail protocols have discussed the facilities desired at "post-office" hosts, i.e. those which provide store-and-forward services, CCN has no plans to provide post-office services; we expect to receive mail only for the staff of CCN. Our greatest concern is to get messages reliably to and from our administrative and user support people who don't habitually use on-line terminals, so we are printing out all mail and distributing it by courier/secretary.

Let me say a friendly word for SNDMSG. This Tenex command, which uses the FTP MAIL command to deliver messages, is very simple but extremely useful--probably because it is so simple. Furthermore, it is one of the well-kept secrets of the Network that SNDMSG can be used to send messages to any host which supports the MAIL command (without requiring logon to FTP). Thus, to send a message to anyone at CCN, the recommended procedure is to do SNDMSG to "name@CCN". This connects to CCN's FTP and sends a "MAIL name" command followed by the message. We now accept any "name" and print an immediate upper-case copy which is distributed to the recipient's office. So, if you SNDMSG to "BRADEN@CCN", your message will end upon my desk, usually within a few hours. Other useful SNDMSG destination at CCN are:

WBK@CCN or KEHL@CCN	(the Director)
RIB@CCN or BELL@CCN	(Supervisorof User Relations)
BBN@CCN or NOBLE@CCN	(Barbara Noble, User Consultant)

This fine service is brought to you by your friendly neighborhood Tenex.

On the other hand, the Tenex READMAIL command is a little too simple. After giving you a message, it should ask you whether you want to delete, keep, forward, and/or repeat the message.

Dave Crocker of NMC has suggested an extension to the MAIL and MLFL (Mail File) commands in CCN's FTP to allow CCN to serve as a mail delivery station for NMC as well as CCN. This extension is intended to be a trivial subset of the full-blown mail protocol which is currently being developed by Jim White et al. It is a simple means to allow CCN's high-speed printers to be used conveniently for receiving and disseminating Network documentation as well as messages. It is based upon extensions of the pathname/user name fields in the MLFL/MAIL commands, respectively. The proposed syntax is as follows:

<userid> [;D[OCUMENT] ;M[ESSAGE] ;C[OPIES]=<integer> ;BIN=<interger>]

The semantics would be:

(1) <userid> will normally be a valid TSO userid; this will be used to determine a charge number to account for the printing. If <userid> is not recognized, the rest of the parameters will be ignored, but the mail will still be accepted. The result will be to print one copy immediately in upper case and send it to Bin 9906, charging it to an overhead account.

(2) MESSAGE means print a copy immediately using the normal upper-case-only train. This is the default.

(3) DOCUMENT means enqueue the text for overnight printing with an upper/lower case print train.

A message indicating receipt (and perhaps the first block) will also be printed immediately in upper case and distributed.

(4) COPIES makes multiple copies. [This facility will not be available immediately].

(5) BIN specifies CCN bin to receive output. Default will be 9906 (ARPA mail bin).

Each incoming message will be time-and-date-stamped. The time/date will appear on the first page of the message (on a separate page in the case of upper/lower case) in the 256 acknowledgment message from FTP and on our system log file. This time/date stamp may be useful for users to keep tabs on their documents, and to allow us to track down missing messages. The semicolon and equal sign delimiters of this syntax are acceptable in the "user" parameter to SNDMSG.

This extended MAIL syntax will be implemented by June 1.

RTB/gjm